



## Standing Firm in the Faith

Rev. Simeon Raddatz,  
University Chaplain

The theme for our university's 161st academic year is "Standing Firm in the Faith," based on Hebrews 10:35–11:2. As this theme serves to encourage students, faculty, and staff, I pray that it will also be edifying to you.

"Faith" commonly expresses complete confidence in someone. Wishing to express confidence in a friend's abilities to do well at a certain task, for example, you might say to him or her, "I have faith in you!" Even though the friend has not yet succeeded in whatever it is, faith is the confidence that he can and will. In Hebrews 11:1 faith is defined in a similar way. It is "the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen." Faith is assurance, conviction, confidence.

Of course, the faith of which the Bible speaks is confidence in the Lord. It is the conviction that He is trustworthy and will keep His promises, even if we do not yet see their fulfillment. Central to God's promises is the Gospel: that God is gracious to us for the sake of His promised Savior, Jesus, who suffered and died for the sins of

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## Lutheran Pedagogy and the Human Soul

by Rev. Dr. Chad Kendall, Assistant Vice President for Mission & Identity

C.S. Lewis, touching upon the topic of humanity, emphasized with great care that people are a creation of God and a part of His Divine plan. When Lewis thought about the human being, he thought in terms of immortality. This is an important perspective because those who see the human being as only of this world may evaluate each person in relation to earthly resources, opportunities, and useful utility. From a purely anthropocentric perspective, the human being may be evaluated as just one piece of the many resources and elements of this world.

Henry David Thoreau, a naturalist from the 19th century, thought from this earthly perspective. At the beginning of his book, *Walden: Life in the Woods*, he says, "But men labor under a mistake. The better part of the man is soon ploughed into the soil for compost." For Thoreau, the best of the human being's worth is commensurate with the earthly elements. In distinction from Lewis, Thoreau sees the human being as just one part of all the elements of this world, and when it's over, it's over.

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## Lutheran Pedagogy and the Human Soul

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Rev. Dr. Chad Kendall

C.S. Lewis has something to say that is holier, richer, and more hopeful than Thoreau. Lewis says this about the human being: “There are no ordinary people. You have never talked to a mere mortal. Nations, cultures, arts, civilizations – these are mortal, and their life is to ours, as the life of a gnat. But it is immortals whom we joke with, work with, marry, snub, and exploit – immortal horrors or everlasting splendours...Next to the Blessed Sacrament itself, your neighbour is the holiest object presented to your senses. If he is your Christian neighbour he is holy in almost the same way, for in him also Christ vere latitat –the glorifier and the glorified, Glory Himself, is truly hidden.”

It is striking to read the two quotes right next to each other. What Lewis has to say about the human being is so much more hopeful and encouraging. Because every person is a creation of God and has a soul, there is more than meets the eye. Lewis is challenging us to think about the people God brings into our lives. We encounter a host of situations. There are people who love and care for us and are thereby a true blessing to us. There are others in our lives that seem to complicate, frustrate, and cause great angst and turmoil. How we respond to people depends on how we view them. Do we see them the way Thoreau saw people? Do we see them as Lewis describes? How we see them will likely change how we engage and interact with people around us.

A Lutheran pedagogy engages virtue and emphasizes what Lewis says about people. This helps us to think about the importance of vocation. Our pedagogy emphasizes the Divine work of our Lord in creation and His continued

work in our daily lives. There are the three theological virtues of faith, hope, and love from 1 Corinthians 13. There are four cardinal virtues: prudence, fortitude, temperance, and justice. These virtues are a part of the work at Concordia University Chicago. Within a Lutheran pedagogy, the cardinal virtues support the intellectual work. The theological virtues support the moral and spiritual framework of that intellectual work. The teachings of these virtues are lived out in practice as each member of the community recognizes that every human is immortal. Just before the Lewis passage cited above, he also says this: “All day long we are, in some degree, helping each other to one or other of these destinations.” Lewis is talking about helping people either to heaven or hell.

To determine whether we are leading our neighbor to heaven or hell, we must recognize whether we utilize and engage our vices or our virtues in relation to others. Do we strive to help our neighbor and improve him, or do we spitefully use and abuse our neighbor for our own advantage?

At CUC, Christ is at the center of all that we say, think, and do. We look at each person—student, faculty, staff, friend, alumni, and constituent of the university—with the lens of C.S. Lewis. We are a community whose rhythm leads us to view our vocation as helping others to heaven. To lead people to heaven is to lean into faith, hope, and love. We help others to succeed. We bring a Christ-like love that is ready to support, assist, teach, and instill the things that offer a deeper hope, both for this life and for the life to come.

In this way, we discover joy as we see our true purpose in this life as we watch the Lord’s work in the lives of those around us. In all things, a Concordia University Chicago education continues the work of formation that glorifies God and serves the neighbor. It is true what C.S. Lewis says when he says that next to the blessed sacrament itself, your neighbor is the holiest object presented to your senses. Perhaps this eucharistic perspective of Lewis can lead us to ponder the depths of our Lord’s Divine love, for us as He feeds us with His precious body and blood, and for the ongoing Divine instruction that shapes one’s understanding of humanity, service, and the awe-inspiring wonder that leads to beholding the depth of His great care for humanity.

# Relaunching the Center for Christian Education

**The Center for Christian Education at Concordia University Chicago** is dedicated to disseminating educational knowledge, programming, and resources to enrich the lives of students, faculty, staff, alumni, and the wider community. Esteemed for its commitment to nurturing a holistic understanding of truth, freedom, and vocation, the Center will integrate faith-based pedagogy, character development initiatives, leadership cultivation, and innovative learning frameworks to forge an unparalleled educational experience.



Anne Thies, Ed.D.

Led by Anne Thies, Ed.D., the vision for the Center for Christian Education is to be a leading force in faith-based educational opportunities, significantly impacting and driving innovation in the field, setting new standards, and expanding the limits of faith-based education aligned with the mission, vision, and values of Concordia University Chicago.

**The New Teacher Institute** was rolled out this summer and held its first session in September. It is designed to help novice educators in their 1st-3rd year of teaching understand educational practices and identify the best classroom strategies to be successful. Rooted in the work of Carol Pelletier Radford, all sessions are hosted online and include 2-professional development (CPDU) hours for each session.

*Institute Highlights include:*

- **Understanding the Reasons Why:** Attendees will delve into the underlying principles and rationale behind teaching methods and classroom strategies.
- **Exploring Skills and Strategies:** Participants will explore a range of skills and strategies essential for new teachers, including classroom management, lesson planning, and student engagement techniques.
- **Building Relationships:** Emphasis on the importance of fostering positive relationships with students, colleagues, and the wider school community.
- **Practical Application:** Discussion on how to implement these skills and strategies effectively in the classroom to enhance student learning and teacher satisfaction.



**Pre-Seminary Student Spotlight:**  
**Nicholas Vukalovich**

senior, Christian Ministry: Theology major

*"Scholarships from CUC have helped me significantly regarding completing and receiving a degree, but more importantly giving me access to an education and to learn from some of the greatest professors and Christian education you can imagine."*

*"My favorite activities to engage in on campus have almost always surrounded the music program. It is amazing, and has the best professors within the Lutheran world who also all love the Lord and serve Him faithfully through their music making and teaching philosophy."*



**DCE/LTE Student Spotlight:**  
**Shanell Jackson**

sophomore, Director of Christian Education and Lutheran Teacher Education major

*"I am a sophomore and Rosa J. Young Scholar at CUC, majoring in both Lutheran Teacher Education (LTE) and Director of Christian Education (DCE) studies. I enjoyed being in Wind Symphony as a flutist my freshman year and now I am a student worker in the Foundation and Alumni Relations Office."*

*"I love participating in my church music ministry, sharing the Word of God, and presenting to local and national youth groups on various opportunities regarding church work. I also volunteer at local food pantries and study astronomy. I love CUC because it has enabled me to grow closer to the Lord as I share Him with others!"*



**Director of Parish Music Student Spotlight:**  
**Joel Freiberg**

senior, Director of Parish Music program major

*"My major is Parish Music—like a music major but cooler! I take regular music courses, but I am also able to learn about topics specific to church music such as preparing music for worship, leading choirs, and working with instrumentalists. The DPM program is as robust as it is intentional and effective. A wide range of skills are taught and experiences provided which allow for help in the learning process. The program is closely tied to chapel life and both music and theology, and is headed by a fine and caring faculty including Professor Emily Woock and Dr. Steve Wente."*

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the whole world. Whoever has faith in this promise receives the forgiveness of sins and is saved. Such faith is not borne of sheer willpower. It comes from outside of us as a gift (Eph. 2:8-9), which the Spirit creates in those who hear the Gospel (Rom. 10:17; Jam. 1:18).

The Christian who confidently stands in this faith also has the assurance that God will fulfill every other promise in Scripture. As St. Paul writes, "For all the promises of God find their Yes in him" (2 Cor. 1:20) and "He who did not spare His own Son... shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?" (Rom. 8:32).

Hebrews 11 encourages the Christian to stand firm in this faith, regardless of life's circumstances: "Therefore do not throw away your confidence...you have need of endurance..." (Heb. 10:35-36). For God's promises, especially His eternal ones, will never disappoint us!



New this fall, the Classical Lutheran Educator Program is one of six church work programs offered at CUC and prepares students for LCMS certification and rostering as a Minister of Religion—Commissioned. A classical education shapes both mind and soul, preparing students for a life of purpose, service and faith. Built around the seven liberal arts, Concordia-Chicago scholars will grow into well-rounded men and women by focusing on the pursuit of truth, goodness and beauty. Classical education students develop the wisdom, creativity and critical thinking needed to navigate a complex world.



Scan the QR Code to listen to Dr. Russell P. Dawn, CUC President, discuss his in-depth exploration of the main components of classical education. The video was filmed at the Greek Temple of Concordia in Agrigento, Sicily, (above photo) where Dr. Dawn, students, faculty, staff, and alumni joined him in the first Classical Education trip in May 2024.

Rev. Dr. Patrick J. Bayens, Professor of Theology, will lead the next Classical Education trip to *Greece & Greek Isles: In the Footsteps of Agamemnon and Pericles, St. John and St. Paul* May 6-15, 2025. If you would like information about this trip please email him at Patrick.Bayens@cuchicago.edu.



**"Grounded in Truth,  
Equipped for Freedom  
and Vocation"**

Concordia University Chicago continues to build upon our legacy of academic rigor and missional distinctiveness—forming students for vocations in their church, family, and the world. Through your gift to the Martin Luther Society, Concordia-Chicago is able to equip students for lives of influence and service in Lutheran churches and schools. Join us today and support the education of future church professionals!

### Concordia University Chicago

7400 Augusta Street River Forest, Illinois 60305  
866-448-3867 [CUCicago.edu/GiveNow](https://CUCicago.edu/GiveNow)

## Concordia University Chicago

### Mission Statement

Steadfast in Jesus Christ as revealed in the Holy Scriptures, Concordia University Chicago promotes academic rigor in its liberal arts and professional programs; grounds students in objective truth, integrity, and excellence; and practices faithfulness to the Confessional teachings of the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, as it forms students for vocations in church, family, and the world.

### Vision Statement

Concordia University Chicago is a Christ-centered Lutheran university where truth, freedom, and vocation form students for lives of influence and service for the common good.